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PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION	1	4
I. PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES	2 - 125	4
A. Conference secretariat	2 - 10	4
B. Information and communication	11 - 16	6
C. National level	17 - 22	8
D. Regional level	23 - 47	9
1. Africa	26 - 27	10
2. Western Asia	28 - 31	12
3. Latin America and the Caribbean	32 - 38	14

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CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
4.	Asia and the Pacific	39 - 44	16
5.	Europe	45 - 47	17
E.	International level	48 - 112	17
1.	Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat	52 - 60	18
2.	Centre for Human Rights	61 - 62	20
3.	United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)	63 - 65	21
4.	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)	66 - 68	22
5.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	69 - 74	23
6.	United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)	75 - 76	24
7.	World Food Programme (WFP)	77 - 78	25
8.	International Labour Organization (ILO)	79 - 81	25
9.	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	82 - 85	25
10.	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	86 - 89	26
11.	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)	90 - 93	27
12.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	94 - 99	28
13.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	100 - 103	29
14.	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	104 - 106	30
15.	International Monetary Fund (IMF)	107	30
16.	World Health Organization (WHO)	108 - 112	30

CONTENTS (continued)

	Paragraphs	Page
F. Host-country arrangements	113 - 115	31
G. Intergovernmental activities	116 - 119	32
H. Non-governmental organizations	120 - 125	33
II. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO CONFERENCE PREPARATIONS	126 - 128	34
Annex. Calendar of events for the period 1994-1995		36

INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-sixth session, the Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 36/8, requested the Secretary-General to report on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1993/233 on the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-seventh session (E/1993/27 and Corr.1) and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission, approved the provisional agenda and documentation for the Commission's thirty-eighth session, including, under item 6 of the agenda, a report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. Accordingly, the present report contains information on the status of preparations being undertaken, and of which the Secretariat has been apprised, at the national, regional and international levels. It also includes information on activities being undertaken by non-governmental organizations, as requested in Commission resolution 36/8. A calendar of events for 1994 and 1995 is provided in the annex to this report.

I. PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

A. Conference secretariat

2. In accordance with the revised appropriations broken down by section with respect to restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat, as set forth in the annex to General Assembly resolution 47/212 B, the Division for the Advancement of Women (formerly of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna), as the core secretariat of the Conference, is now part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat at Headquarters. The move of the staff of the Division from the United Nations Office at Vienna to United Nations Headquarters in New York was completed in October 1993.

3. In keeping with General Assembly resolution 37/14 B, annex, a steering committee has been established to plan and coordinate all technical, administrative, logistic and financial aspects of the Conference. The committee includes representatives of all relevant offices in the United Nations Secretariat.

4. The Secretary-General of the Conference has established an ad hoc inter-agency advisory committee on the Conference, constituting a structure for channelling advice and for ensuring coordination of Conference preparations, as a complement to the normal inter-agency coordination structure. The inter-agency committee meets at least once every three months, and on an ad hoc basis, as necessary. The United Nations system's active participation in the preparations for the Conference at all levels is very encouraging. Information about the activities of the various organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system in preparation for the Conference is contained in subsection E below.

5. The Secretary-General of the Conference has undertaken a number of missions to assess the status of preparations at the national level, and to evaluate issues of concern to women. Those missions also provided the opportunity to seek voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for activities for the preparatory Conference, including support for national preparations in developing countries. Since she assumed her duties in February 1993, the Secretary-General has paid official visits to the following countries: Canada, Italy, India, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Germany. She has also held consultations with organizations of the United Nations system, with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and with private institutions and foundations to promote equality of women, development and peace, and to encourage Conference preparations at all levels. Furthermore, she has participated in several major meetings in Africa, Europe, Latin America and Asia where she provided briefings on the Conference and its preparations.

6. Pursuant to Commission resolution 36/8, section D, a Trust Fund for preparatory activities for the Conference has been established. Contributions are being encouraged from member States and other donors. As of December 1993, 14 Governments had contributed or pledged their support to the Trust Fund. Three foundations and one non-governmental organization have contributed to the Trust Fund.

7. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) expert group on women in development has established a Facilitation Initiative for Conference preparations in order to coordinate members' support to developing countries in their preparations for the Conference and to ensure an equitable spread and optimal use of scarce human and financial resources.

8. In addition to the expert group meetings that are being convened to examine the key priority themes in each of the areas of equality, development and peace for the period 1993-1996 (Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15, annex, sect. III), work is proceeding in the Conference secretariat on a number of additional areas to be fed into Conference preparations, including those on women relating to finance; women relating to science and technology; women relating to education; and women relating to the concerns of a new generation of women and men working together for equality.

9. Before the Fourth World Conference on Women takes place in September 1995, the United Nations will have convened several other major conferences, including the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, and the World Summit for Social Development. (The year 1995 is also the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization.) Since women's issues cut across all the areas covered by those conferences, preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women will utilize the results of the conferences. At the same time, the Conference secretariat is collaborating closely with those preparing the other conferences and events to make sure that they reflect a strong articulation and representation of women's issues. Furthermore, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/108, paragraph 29, requested the Secretary-General to make available for the Fourth World Conference on Women reports and decisions of the World Conference on Human Rights, the International

Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development.

10. It is planned to issue, in lieu of Conference 95, a more regular newsletter, possibly on a monthly basis, to provide ongoing information on Conference preparations and related activities.

B. Information and communication

11. The Conference secretariat conducted a two-day informal workshop on 25 and 26 October 1993 to develop an information and communication strategy for the Conference. The meeting made a series of practical recommendations concerning information and communication with non-governmental organizations and networks working at the regional level, and with global/mainstream media, and regarding networking related to telecommunications and women. The workshop also identified a series of tasks for immediate action.

12. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat has developed an information strategy for the Fourth World Conference on Women and plans to implement a series of activities and to produce a variety of products in connection with the Conference. These include print and audiovisual products.

13. Print:

(a) A Conference backgrounder has been issued in English, French and Spanish;

(b) Work is continuing on a pre-Conference brochure to be issued in 1994;

(c) A Conference poster will be issued in 1994;

(d) In 1994, the Department of Public Information's annual student leaflet targeting upper-level primary students will focus on the girl child and the Fourth World Conference on Women. It will be issued in 1994;

(e) As part of the Department of Public Information's ongoing educational series, "About the United Nations", an educational video and teaching guide on women will be issued in 1994. The target audience is students and teachers at the secondary and upper-secondary levels;

(f) Several fact-sheets/features/press releases are under preparation. They will be issued periodically on issues highlighting Conference themes;

(g) A reprint of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 1/ will be issued in 1994;

(h) A special edition of Notes for Speakers, a public information publication aimed at the general public, on women, and dealing with Conference priority issues, is planned for 1995.

14. Film/video:

(a) Four segments of the television programme UN in Action will be issued in the period 1994-1995 for use in the Cable News Network (CNN) weekly programme World Report;

(b) One public service announcement will be produced in 1995;

(c) Under the Department of Public Information's ongoing series "About the United Nations", an educational video on the girl child and women will be produced in 1994 (see para. 13);

(d) Negotiations are under way for participation in a documentary with an outside partner highlighting key issues of the Conference;

(e) United Nations TV's World Chronicle series will present a number of interviews with leading personalities concerned with United Nations work and preparations for the Conference.

15. Radio:

(a) Two public service announcements, to be distributed worldwide, will be produced in the period 1994 and 1995;

(b) United Nations Radio's weekly Women series will continue to produce programmes highlighting issues to be discussed at the Conference;

(c) A special pre-Conference edition of the Women series will be produced in early 1995;

(d) Negotiations are under way for collaboration with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service to produce a series of programmes related to the Conference.

16. Other:

(a) The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat has organized, and will continue to organize, press conferences of the Secretary-General of the Conference;

(b) The Department of Public Information will co-sponsor with other United Nations bodies the launching of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, and of the updated edition of The World's Women, 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics; 2/

(c) The Department of Public Information is coordinating with United Nations bodies and the secretariat of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations the collection and distribution of slide packages;

(d) A programme of activities is being developed for United Nations information centres aimed at greater involvement of youth;

(e) In cooperation with other United Nations bodies, the Department of Public Information is coordinating special events and non-governmental organization briefings related to observances including International Women's Day, International Literacy Day, and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, among others;

(f) The Department of Public Information is collaborating with the Feminist Press on a book on women in politics scheduled for 1995.

C. National level

17. In accordance with Commission resolution 36/8, section B, the Secretary-General sent a note verbale in August 1992 to all member States and permanent observers, informing them of the recommendation expressed in paragraph 1 of section B of the resolution concerning the establishment of national committees or the designation of national focal points to initiate and promote preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Commission, in its resolution 37/7, section I, urged all Governments that had not already done so to establish national committees or to designate focal points without delay to initiate and promote preparations for the Conference. As of 1 November 1993, the Secretariat had been informed of 24 such national committees, or focal points, having been established. Subsequently, a second note verbale was sent to all member States and permanent observers in December 1993 drawing their attention to the recommendation contained in Commission resolution 36/8, and reiterated in its resolution 37/7. Information on the composition, mandate and activities of national committees or focal points is being made available on request. The addresses of national committees and focal points will be disseminated by the Conference secretariat. It is hoped that this will facilitate and encourage direct contact and communication, and the exchange of experience and ideas, among and between Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals, particularly women, during the preparatory process.

18. According to Commission resolution 37/7, each Government is expected to prepare a national report. National reports are expected to gather the facts, assess the obstacles, and identify priorities for concrete action. The preparation of the national report is intended to constitute a process of national self-reflection, one that speeds up the unfinished work of implementing the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

19. In order to assist countries in the preparation of those reports, and to facilitate some standardization among reports to increase their analytical value and impact for consensus-building at the regional and global conferences, the Commission, in its resolution 37/7, section IV, requested the Secretariat to prepare a list of the most significant indicators on the basis of the critical areas of concern in the structure of the Platform for Action, taking into account the availability of reliable national statistics. Subsequently, the Secretary-General prepared guidelines for the preparation of national reports for the Fourth World Conference on Women. These were transmitted, by a note verbale of 7 October 1993, to all member States and permanent observers. They have also been widely circulated among non-governmental organizations, and the field representatives of United Nations funds and programmes.

20. In addition to the guidelines for the preparation of national reports, including a set of key indicators, the Secretary-General of the Conference has also prepared general guidelines for preparatory activities at the national, regional and global levels. The guidelines are intended to give focus to the preparatory activities at all levels. They were communicated to all member States and permanent observers by a note verbale of 7 October 1993. They have also been widely distributed through the United Nations system and the non-governmental organization community.

21. National preparatory activities, and particularly the preparation of the national reports, are of crucial importance for a successful Conference. The Commission, in its resolution 37/7, section IV, urged Governments to initiate preparations for their national reports as soon as possible and to ensure that they were submitted to the regional conferences in time to serve as contributions to the regional review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and to the Conference secretariat in time to serve as input for the global review and appraisal. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/108, appealed to countries to compile their reports in earnest and to forward them in time, both to their respective regional commissions and to the secretariat of the Conference. Governments have been invited to prepare one national report, which should be made available first to the secretariat of the appropriate regional commission; a copy of the same report should be made available to the Conference secretariat in New York for the purpose of preparing the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Furthermore, national reports will be an important source of information for the preparation of the Platform for Action.

22. The secretariats of the regional commissions, under whose auspices the regional preparatory conferences are being convened, have communicated to member States of the respective regions that the national reports should reach the secretariats approximately six months prior to the date of the regional conference, that is to say, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA): end of February 1994; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA): end of March 1994; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): end of March 1994; Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): end of November 1993; and Economic Commission for Europe (ECE): April 1994. (For a schedule of the conferences, see annex.) In order to be able to draw from the national reports, the Conference secretariat hopes to have all the national reports available by May 1994.

D. Regional level

23. As recommended in Commission resolution 36/8, section B, regional preparatory activities are being conducted under the auspices of the regional commissions. Regional preparatory conferences are scheduled to take place in all five regions between May and December 1994.

24. The Secretary-General of the Conference convened a meeting of focal points of the regional commissions and of representatives of host countries of the five regional preparatory conferences, which met from 9 to 11 August 1993 in

New York, to discuss plans and perspectives for regional preparatory activities. The meeting took note of the work plans and timetables of the various regions and agreed on a set of conclusions that should ensure a smooth and well-coordinated preparatory process.

25. In its resolution 48/108 on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to lend support to the convening of the regional preparatory meetings so as to lay a good foundation for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

1. Africa

26. The Fifth Regional Conference on Women, which will also be the regional preparatory conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women, is scheduled to be held at Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 23 November 1994, under the auspices of ECA. A non-governmental organization forum will be held from 14 to 17 November 1994, also in Dakar.

27. The African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) of ECA has carried out the following activities in preparation for the regional conference:

(a) In March 1993, ATRCW organized and convened a regional inter-agency meeting that was attended by organizations of the United Nations system, regional organizations and donor agencies. The meeting discussed measures and mechanisms for coordinating activities relating to women in Africa for the regional and world conferences and beyond. It discussed various critical areas of concern to women in Africa and prepared a draft agenda for the Fifth Regional Conference. Several United Nations bodies attending the meeting agreed to prepare technical papers for the Fifth Regional Conference. The meeting also constituted an inter-agency task force composed of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the African Development Bank, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECA as the overall coordinator;

(b) In April 1993, ATRCW organized and convened the Fourteenth Meeting of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC). As part of the agenda and work programme, the meeting discussed the diversity of structures responsible for coordinating preparations for the Conference;

(c) In May 1993, the ECA Conference of African Ministers responsible for economic development and planning, at its nineteenth meeting, adopted resolution 753 (XXVIII), entitled "Women in development, the African Regional Preparatory Meeting (1994) for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace (1995)", the annex to which contained the agenda for the Fifth Regional Conference on Women and its thematic outline. The agenda and thematic outline have been sent to member States, to non-governmental organizations and to United Nations organizations. The agenda includes the following items: an overview assessment of the implementation of the Nairobi

Forward-looking Strategies; priority areas for the twenty-first century (women in the peace process; equality, education and social issues; women's empowerment; and women, environment and sustainable development); and an African Platform for Action;

(d) As part of coordination, sensitization and outreach to ensure that the objectives and the agenda of the Fifth Regional Conference were known, ATRCW participated in, or organized, several regional events, including the following:

(i) East Africa Conference on Women, Kampala, Uganda, 4-9 July 1993, attended by non-governmental organizations and government representatives from Uganda, Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Rwanda. The objective of the Conference was to review the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies within the subregion. It also considered areas of concern and activities in the preparation of the Dakar and Beijing conferences;

(ii) Conference of African Francophone and Lusophone Ministers of Women Affairs and Rural Development, November 1993. The main objective of this meeting was to sensitize member States and to inform them of the important role played by rural women in Africa, and to propose strategies and recommendations for the improvement of their status. The report of this meeting will constitute a background document for the regional preparatory meeting and will serve as input into the African Platform for Action;

(iii) Regional Conference on Women and Peace, held in Kampala, Uganda, in November 1993. The report of this meeting will serve as a background document for the Fifth Regional Conference (ATRCW facilitated and participated in this conference);

(iv) An ad hoc expert group meeting to consider strategies for enhancing women's skills in mainstreaming and in decision-making, and to review progress in Fifth Regional Conference preparations, held in December 1993 (organized and convened by ATRCW). The meeting was attended by a selected number of Women in Development (WID) experts and women media experts from 13 African countries, and representatives of regional organizations and United Nations bodies, and of Interpress service (IPS). Also in attendance was the African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), whose responsibility includes the coordination of the African non-governmental organization Forum in Dakar in 1994. For the first time, media women experts were invited to participate in the meeting. The meeting adopted strategies and recommendations on the role of the media in disseminating information, in sensitizing the different components of society to gender issues, and in increasing public awareness about the Dakar and Beijing conferences;

(e) Contacts with various non-governmental organizations have been strengthened and the ATRCW information network has now established a list of media women associations at the national and subregional levels for effective communication and information dissemination in connection with the regional and

world conferences. ATRCW is working closely with United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations to disseminate information about the conferences and their preparatory process;

(f) A circular letter was sent to all national machineries and strategic non-governmental organizations in July 1993 informing them about the guidelines for the preparation of national reports and the deadlines for submission of those reports;

(g) For early 1994, five subregional workshops are being planned for eastern, northern, central, western and southern Africa. The main objective of those workshops will be to sensitize member States, to educate and inform them about the objectives of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and to urge men, women and youth to be actively involved in the preparation for the regional and world conferences on women;

(h) ATRCW is now publishing a newsletter called FEMMELINE, a news update on preparatory activities for the Fifth Regional Conference on Women/regional preparatory meeting to the Fourth World Conference on Women. FEMMELINE will be published quarterly.

2. Western Asia

28. Under the auspices of ESCWA, the Regional Preparatory Conference will take place from 6 to 10 November 1994 in Amman, Jordan.

29. ESCWA provides technical assistance to its member States in the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women. This assistance has been organized into four phases:

(a) Phase one:

(i) ESCWA sent a note verbale to its member States on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, transmitting various documents, including guidelines for preparatory activities and for the preparation of national reports of the Conference secretariat, which had been translated into Arabic by ESCWA for the benefit of member States;

(ii) ESCWA established the following timetable for preparatory activities: after the submission of national reports to the ESCWA secretariat in March 1994, ESCWA, in collaboration with national machineries, will organize national workshops during the second quarter of 1994 in order to finalize national platforms for action. The national reports, together with the national platforms for action, will constitute the main inputs into the preparation of a regional position paper on issues and priorities of member States. An expert group meeting will be convened by ESCWA in September 1994 to draft the Regional Platform for Action to serve as the main working document for adoption by member States at the regional preparatory meeting in November 1994;

(iii) Technical missions of ESCWA staff, funded by UNIFEM, to 10 member States took place during November and December 1993 to brief the relevant authorities on the preparatory process, and to discuss details of activities to be implemented at the national level. In particular, those missions aimed at facilitating the formation of joint national committees and/or working groups, where they did not yet exist. The ESCWA team advised the authorities on the possible composition and terms of reference of such joint committees with a view to ensuring representation from all ministries concerned with women's affairs, notably education, labour, health, planning, statistics, social affairs, justice and legal affairs. It included information on the participation of non-governmental organizations and of grass-roots organizations in the preparation of national reports and the national platform for action, stressing the participatory approach to their elaboration and the active involvement of non-governmental organizations of all women and of young people. Authorities were briefed on the outline for national reports, including key indicators. Focal points for follow-up purposes were established. Several more technical missions have been planned for early 1994;

(b) Phase two:

(i) During the second quarter of 1994, ESCWA will convene national workshops in each of the member States visited during phase one in order to finalize the national platforms for action. The ESCWA team will act as facilitator in these workshops with respect to review of the platforms for action, in light of the national reports, with the joint national committees and the non-governmental organizations;

(c) Phase three:

(i) The national reports and the national platforms for action will constitute the main inputs into the preparation of the regional position paper on issues and priorities of member States. An expert group meeting in September 1994 will prepare a draft regional platform for action;

(d) Phase four:

(i) Adoption of a Regional Platform for Action at the Regional Preparatory Conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women in November 1994.

30. In collaboration with agencies of the United Nations system, ESCWA has implemented various activities, including a one-day workshop for non-governmental organizations in Egypt, and the preparation of reports on women in agriculture in several member States. It also co-sponsored (with the National Federation of Business and Professional Women in Jordan and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women) the Regional and National Conference on Arab Women and Sustainable Development, held in Amman, Jordan, from 26 to 28 April 1993.

31. Under its work programme for the period 1992-1993, ESCWA undertook the preparation of the following studies to assess the situation of women in light of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women:

(a) Review of the situation of Arab women in the business and professional areas: case-study of Egypt;

(b) Vocational training as a tool of empowering women in business - lessons and opportunities: case-study of Jordan;

(c) Women and access to higher education in the Arab world: lessons and opportunities;

(d) Reintegration of women returnees and their families into their societies of origin pursuant to the Gulf crisis.

3. Latin America and the Caribbean

32. The Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, which will serve as the regional preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women, will take place from 26 to 30 September 1994 in Mar del Plata, Argentina, under the auspices of ECLAC.

33. As of 1 September 1993, the Women in Development Unit of ECLAC was relocated into the Office of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC. This reorganization is intended to strengthen the Unit, to facilitate the coordination of the work carried out by it, to provide it with more autonomy in its subject area and to reinforce its linkage with ECLAC's mainstream.

34. In preparation for the regional meeting, the host-country agreement between ECLAC and the Government of Argentina has already been signed, ECLAC has visited the Conference premises, and agreement has been reached on the logistic aspects of the Conference. The Government of Argentina has given high priority to the event and is providing ample facilities for its accomplishment.

35. ECLAC is preparing the regional diagnosis on the situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean for the evaluation that will be carried out at the Regional Conference in 1994. This work is being done in coordination with the specialized agencies of the United Nations and considering the regular mandates on periodic evaluations. The following chapters are being discussed:

(a) Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the 1990s: some elements for a diagnosis and proposals;

(b) The new theoretic inputs for the comprehension of the condition of women in society: the gender perspective and its linkage with the development themes;

(c) Women and work in the 1990s: the significance of the changes in Latin America and the Caribbean;

(d) The health of women in Latin America and the Caribbean: the new approach;

(e) Educational transformation and the role of women;

(f) Culture, gender and modernity;

(g) Participation in decision-making; women and power; democracy, citizenship and gender;

(h) Women and violence;

(i) Women and environment.

The chapters on the different sectors will be coordinated with inputs from the United Nations system at the regional level. A letter has been sent to the main academic centres and to women's affairs offices of the region in order to collect updated information, which is being processed as received in the ECLAC secretariat. The existing statistical information is also being processed, especially that which originates from the last censuses prepared by the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and the household surveys of the Statistics and Projections Division of ECLAC. A number of studies that will be used as inputs for the documentation of the Regional Conference have already been completed.

36. In accordance with the fifth Regional Conference, the Regional Programme of Action for Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001, has been initiated. Discussions regarding its contents are being carried out at the Presiding Officers' meetings, with the specialized agencies of the United Nations, and with intergovernmental bodies; discussions took place as well at a meeting of experts convened for that purpose in Mexico, in October 1992.

37. In fulfilling its coordination tasks, ECLAC implemented the following steps:

(a) During 1993, two meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference were convened (Caracas, May 1993; Santiago, December 1993);

(b) So far, three inter-institutional meetings of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system have taken place to coordinate regional preparatory activities for the Regional Conference (Santiago, September 1992; Caracas, May 1993; Santiago, December 1993);

(c) The guidelines for the preparation of national reports and the recommendations for the establishment of national committees have been sent to all member States of the regional commission, requesting them to forward relevant information to the ECLAC secretariat;

(d) Coordination has been established with the subregional coordinators of UNIFEM regarding support for the preparation of national reports;

(e) ECLAC, together with the Inter-American Development Bank, is co-sponsoring a meeting on women that will give high visibility to the regional and world conferences on women (1 and 2 March 1994 in Washington, D.C. (technical preparatory meeting), and 6 and 7 April 1994, in Guadalajara, Mexico).

38. ECLAC has established close collaboration with non-governmental organizations in the region in the preparation of their tasks related to both the regional and the world conferences, as well as the non-governmental organization forums.

4. Asia and the Pacific

39. Under the auspices of ESCAP, the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, which is the regional preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women of the Asia and Pacific Region, will take place from 7 to 14 June 1994 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

40. ESCAP convened the Asian and Pacific Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations on Women in Development at Manila, Philippines, from 16 to 20 November 1993, jointly with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), in coordination with the Asian and Pacific Non-Governmental Organization Working Group. The symposium was attended by 550 representatives of 320 non-governmental organizations from 32 countries of the Asian and Pacific region. Approximately 100 observers, including donor agency representatives, representatives of United Nations organizations, and researchers as well as representatives from Governments also attended the Symposium.

41. The Symposium discussed extensively the situation of women in the region, especially the trends of recent years in the context of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

42. Detailed discussions were carried out in 12 workshops dealing with 12 main issues: (a) health; (b) labour rights; (c) agriculture; (d) culture and education; (e) political empowerment; (f) economic empowerment; (g) violence against women; (h) human rights; (i) science and technology; (j) indigenous women; (k) family; and (l) environment. Those were followed by four subregional workshops on South-East Asia, East Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific. Based on the deliberations of those workshops, a draft regional plan of action was prepared and placed before the Symposium at the final day of the meeting. It was decided that the draft plan of action would be finalized at the meeting of the Asian and Pacific Non-Governmental Organization Working Group early in 1994 in order to be placed before the Ministerial Conference in June 1994.

43. ESCAP decided to convene an expert group meeting on women in development at Bangkok from 8 to 11 February 1994. It was decided that the objective of the expert group meeting would be to review (a) three background studies on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, and (b) a draft Asian and Pacific plan of action for the advancement of women. The three studies, on women in economic development, women in social development, and women and empowerment, will serve as background documents to the Second Asian and Pacific

Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, and the draft plan of action will be before the same conference for discussion and adoption. Around 25 experts were invited to participate in the meeting. In addition, representatives of United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and several international organizations were scheduled to attend the meeting.

44. In addition to the above-mentioned meetings, a regional overview paper on the status of women will be prepared by the ESCAP secretariat for submission to the Ministerial Conference. Furthermore, the preparation of a publication entitled "Women in Asia and the Pacific: a statistical profile" is under way for distribution at the Ministerial Conference.

5. Europe

45. Based on a decision taken by ECE at its forty-eighth session in April 1993, a High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for the European Region will take place from 17 to 21 October 1994 in Vienna, Austria. The agenda for the Meeting is expected to be approved by ECE at its forty-ninth session in April 1994. A proposed agenda was scheduled to be before the Ad Hoc Meeting of ECE on 31 January 1994. In accordance with ECE decision K (48), the agenda of the Regional Preparatory Meeting will include, inter alia, a review and appraisal of the implementation at the regional level of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000, and an elaboration of regional input to the Platform for Action, emphasizing the role of women in the economy, in particular in countries in transition.

46. This will be the first time that ECE participates in the convening of a regional preparatory meeting in conjunction with a world conference on women. An ECE internal task force, consisting of 14 members and chaired by the Deputy Executive Secretary, was established in October 1993. It will steer the substantive preparations for the Regional Preparatory Meeting, including the preparation of the preliminary agenda, preparation of reports of consultants, and other tasks related to the Regional Preparatory Meeting.

47. In order to ensure the input of bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as to secure coordination with other regional organizations, such as the Council of Europe, the European Community (EU), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Nordic Forum, a formal consultative meeting is envisaged after the consultations on the draft agenda have been completed.

E. International level

48. Since the last session of the Commission on the Status of Women, preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women have been discussed by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993, and by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. By its decision 1993/233, the Council took note of the report of the Commission on its thirty-seventh session.

49. The General Assembly discussed Conference preparations in the framework of its debate on item 111 (advancement of women) in its agenda. A total of 70 Member States, one observer, and four organizations (from the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations) spoke on this item. The vast majority of speakers commented on the Conference and its preparatory process.

50. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/108 on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, requested the Commission, when considering the priority theme relating to development during its thirty-eighth and subsequent sessions, to ensure its early contribution to the preparatory work of forthcoming major international conferences, such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the World Summit for Social Development, and to address the impact of technologies on women. The Assembly took a decision on the modalities for participation in and contribution to the preparatory process by non-governmental organizations, particularly those not in consultative status. These guidelines were set out in an annex to the resolution.

51. A number of activities are being undertaken within the United Nations system with regard to the status and advancement of women. The Fourth World Conference on Women is being used by many as an added impetus to focus or to intensify those activities. Below is a description of ongoing, new and planned activities in preparation for the Conference, of which the Conference secretariat has been apprised.

1. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat

(a) Statistical Division

52. Plans for the Fourth World Conference on Women have given a key role to further work on gender statistics at the international level through the preparation of an updated edition of The World's Women, 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics as an official document for the Conference, and at the national level through the assembling of gender-disaggregated statistics for the elaboration of national reports.

53. The Statistical Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat is organizing and coordinating the preparation of the second edition of The World's Women in collaboration with many United Nations bodies. Collaboration and sponsorship are even more extensive and significant in the development of the second edition, as the lead sponsors of the first edition, namely, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNIFEM and the Division for the Advancement of Women, have been joined by UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). Other technical collaborators include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Health

Organization (WHO) and the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

54. The second edition of The World's Women will maintain the same basic structure as the first, with an overview and six chapters, covering women and men and families; housing, human settlements and environment; women's and men's work; public life and leadership; education, science and media; and health.

55. The development of statistics for the publication is being carried out in close complementarity with work on the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (WISTAT), version 3. Pursuant to the technical meeting for the second edition of The World's Women, a new approach, in which the Statistical Division worked closely with the regional commissions, was used to improve the coverage and timeliness of data. Work on WISTAT receives ongoing support from UNFPA and version 3 will be available in the spring of 1994.

56. In developing national capability to prepare databases and national reports on women, the Statistical Division is strengthening a coordinated approach through the WID subgroup of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP). JCGP is a coordinating body consisting of UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project with JCGP in gender statistics is a response to the impact of the publication The World's Women, and the need expressed by many countries for help in producing similar national gender statistics reports, in particular in light of the holding of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

57. Under the JCGP-supported project, a manual is being prepared on how to compile and organize statistics on gender issues and how to present tables and charts and write up the analysis of these data. A draft of the full text will be circulated in the summer of 1994. In the meanwhile, materials intended for the manual have been introduced in three regional and subregional workshops on gender statistics:

(a) Subregional workshop on gender statistics for Eastern and Southern Africa, Botswana, August 1993, sponsored by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA);

(b) Subregional workshop on statistics and indicators on women for francophone African countries, Morocco, 13-17 December 1993, sponsored by INSTRAW;

(c) Regional workshop on gender statistics, Thailand, 24-28 January 1994, sponsored by UNIFEM and INSTRAW.

58. The same project is also supporting initiatives to develop The World's Women-type publications at the national level in two countries and one publication of this kind for the ESCWA region as a whole. In addition, the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat is assisting several countries, for example, Kenya and Bangladesh, to develop gender statistics reports in connection with ongoing statistical projects.

(b) Population Division

59. While at this point no specific activities are being undertaken by the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, many of the activities of this Division are relevant to the Conference. In particular, the Population Division, in collaboration with UNFPA, is undertaking preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, which will take place in September 1994. The issues of women's roles and status and the relationship of those issues to demographic factors have occupied a prominent place in preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development. An expert group meeting on population and women was among the six expert group meetings convened to focus on issues identified as requiring the greatest attention, during the next decade, from the international community and from the International Conference on Population and Development itself. Gender issues also received some attention at the five other expert group meetings, as well as at the five regional preparatory conferences. At the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development, held in May 1993, it was agreed that gender issues should be included in all the topical chapters of the main document to be prepared for the International Conference on Population and Development, but that there should also be a chapter on "Gender equality and empowerment of women" for the purpose of dealing with such overarching gender issues, as did not fit naturally into any of the other chapters.

60. The Population Division is also contributing data and analytic reports to the Statistical Division for use in the update of The World's Women.

2. Centre for Human Rights

61. Following the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 3/ by the World Conference on Human Rights, which took place in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, the Centre for Human Rights prepared a plan of activities for the implementation of the provisions contained therein. An important part deals with the equal status and human rights of women. The plan of activities, which has been discussed with the Division for the Advancement of Women and with other United Nations bodies, will serve as the basis for cooperation with United Nations organizations and bodies in the implementation of the results of the World Conference on Human Rights.

62. In a recommendation adopted at its fourth session (20 September-8 October 1993), the Committee on the Rights of the Child, established under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognized the importance of being associated with the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women, and decided to devote one of its future meetings to the consideration of its contribution to this event.

3. United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

63. In May 1993, UNIFEM developed its corporate Strategy for the 1995 Conference. The eight main objectives of the Strategy are all responsive to, and in line with, specific and key target areas identified for the preparatory framework by the international community. UNIFEM's Consultative Committee endorsed the Strategy at its September 1993 session. UNIFEM's Consultative Committee approved US$ 1.5 million from UNIFEM core resources for preparatory activities under a two-year umbrella programme for the period 1994-1995. UNIFEM hopes that this amount can be increased through ongoing fund-raising and donor support.

64. A number of activities have already been launched and/or implemented since 1993, and an amount of just under US$ 300,000 has been committed for these efforts. The following are examples of UNIFEM-supported activities in 1993:

(a) Global activities:

(i) Development of a database and dissemination of a directory and brochure on women, science and technology;

(ii) Expert group meeting on women, science and technology (in cooperation with DAW and linked to the working group meeting on gender and technology of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development);

(iii) Preparation of a handbook entitled Influencing a UN Conference - An Agenda for Gender, a guide for participants in United Nations preparatory, regional and world conferences, and the holding in 1994 of four seminars/workshops (China, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Amman), to train women on how to work a United Nations conference;

(b) Activities in Latin America and the Caribbean:

(i) Assistance for national preparations (Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil);

(ii) Support for the first regional meeting of directors of national machineries on women (Caribbean);

(c) Activities in Africa:

(i) Assessment of activities/support to national preparations (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya);

(ii) Support to the Franco-African Conference on Women in Development, Gabon;

(d) Activities in Asia and the Pacific:

(i) Support for a non-governmental organization working group to plan the agenda for the Non-Governmental Organization Symposium on Women in Development, November 1993, Manila, and for the Symposium itself;

(ii) Support for the preparation of national reports and the regional platform for action in the ESCWA region (10 countries).

65. Some of the key activity areas for 1994 include:

(a) Continuing support for diverse groups of women in all regions to participate effectively in national preparations, including the elaboration of national reports, and in regional preparations;

(b) Development of an effective and coherent communications and media strategy targeted at the Conference;

(c) Continuing support for training activities regarding United Nations conferences and their preparatory processes;

(d) Support to, and cooperation with, the secretariat of the Conference in various areas, including women and science and technology, women and credit, young people, and parliamentarians.

4. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

66. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women is involved in activities at the national level aimed at assisting member States in preparing their national reports, particularly with regard to the review and analysis of the data needed to construct indicators in 35 critical areas of concern, in accordance with Commission on the Status of Women resolution 37/7, section IV. For this purpose, INSTRAW is conducting subregional workshops. Those workshops are also designed to improve the awareness on the part of both data producers and data users of the importance of gender-sensitive statistics and socio-economic indicators, and of the need for collecting and compiling gender-specific information, and to improve the use of existing data to close the data gaps that restrain the full recognition and valuation of women's contribution to development. Subregional gender statistics workshops have been held in Rarotonga (for the Southern Pacific countries), and Rabat (for francophone African countries). Workshops are being planned for the Asian subregion (to take place in Japan) and for Southern Africa (to take place in the third quarter of 1994). A national workshop took place in Turkey in late 1992, and one is being planned for the Dominican Republic for early 1994.

67. Materials and information are being prepared for presentation at the Conference. They will feature research findings, improved methodologies and practical training tools. They will cover the following areas: methodologies for valuing the contribution of women to development; women, environment and

sustainable development; women and communication; women's access to credit and gender impact of credit projects; and various gender-related training materials.

68. Materials from case-studies and from the global analysis of the project concerning methodologies for valuing the contribution of women to development will be used as part of INSTRAW's contribution to the updated edition of The World's Women.

5. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

69. The UNDP Administrator has affirmed UNDP's commitment to providing support to preparatory activities for the Conference. In a letter dated 2 November 1993, addressed to UNDP resident representatives, the Administrator stressed that they were expected to contribute effectively to the process through their role as resident coordinators for the United Nations system. It was further suggested that field offices could undertake direct support of the preparation of Governments' national reports for the Conference, mobilization and coordination of the efforts of the United Nations community, and encouragement of the participation of civil society in the process. Other suggested areas for support include assistance in promoting awareness of the Conference and its key issues through dissemination of information, sponsoring of seminars, and support for audiovisual productions to capture the experience, sentiments and voices of women from developing countries.

70. The main theme of the 1995 edition of the Human Development Report will be devoted to women. It is expected that this publication will be one of the major reports to be circulated worldwide.

71. The UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific has funded the Symposium of Non-governmental Organizations on Women in Development, which was convened by ESCAP and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, and held from 16 to 20 November 1993 in Manila.

72. A number of UNDP field offices in Asia are supporting different initiatives relating to the preparation of national reports. The UNDP field office in Beijing is working closely with the All China Women's Federation to assist it with national preparatory activities as well as with preparations for the Conference and the Non-Governmental Organization Forum.

73. An interregional project using Women in Development Special Programme Resources (WID SPR) and devoted to assisting Conference preparatory activities was approved. It is entitled "Making Beijing successful".

74. Other SPR-funded activities include:

(a) An umbrella interregional gender statistics programme to strengthen capacity in the establishment of gender-disaggregated statistics in selected countries;

(b) Support towards a system-wide study of existing technical and financial cooperation targeting programmes in favour of women;

(c) A Media Women Regional Seminar, to be held in Zambia, which UNDP is providing financial support for, and is co-sponsoring with UNIFEM, the United Methodist Church, the Federation of African Media Women, the Tanzania Media Women's Association and Arameg Communications. The Seminar will train at least 25 women journalists who cover international conferences in electronic and in print media. The Seminar will provide an orientation in gender analysis, and will impart practical skills in news coverage and reporting through a gender-specific lens;

(d) Providing of support for a 40-minute video production entitled "Participation in healing: women and the struggle to survive in Zambia" within the framework of "Women's Voices". This project is being implemented by the All Africa Conference of Churches and Visafric Productions;

(e) Support for a Central American subregional project to assist non-governmental organizations and civil society in their preparations for the Regional Preparatory Conference on Women in Development to be held in Argentina in September 1994, and the Beijing Conference. The project will undertake a consultative process in each participating country to document the situation of women and elaborate proposals for future policies and interventions. An information system will be created to assist government and civil society in integrating women's concerns into the subregional political, economic and social processes;

(f) Providing of support to Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea for capacity-building in gender and development and mainstreaming of women's concerns among indigenous institutions.

6. United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

75. A joint issues paper on "Women, drug abuse and drug control" prepared by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), WHO and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat is being finalized and will be presented as a background document to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women. This report is one of the major outcomes of the project on Women and drug abuse, started in 1991 by WHO and UNDCP, which has sought to reduce the demand for drugs and the harmful consequences of substance abuse by women. The paper, which also incorporates the views of other United Nations bodies, treats women as active agents rather than as victims, and discusses the connection between women, drug abuse and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

76. At the same time UNDCP is increasing its efforts to build into its field programme, especially in alternative development projects, special components that target the concerns of women.

7. World Food Programme (WFP)

77. WFP has joined the group of major sponsors of the updated edition of The World's Women, 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics by providing substantial financial support.

78. An action plan for selected country offices in each region is being prepared to apply the WFP policy on WID to ongoing and pipeline projects, including the lessons learned from the 1985 WID review of WFP-supported projects.

8. International Labour Organization (ILO)

79. ILO will be contributing to the preparation of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development and is the leading United Nations body involved in the preparation of the chapter on the informal sector. It will also contribute to the chapter on women's work and the economy for the updated version of The World's Women, 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics. The results of ILO's interdepartmental project on equality for women in employment and of the International Forum on Equality for Women in a Changing World, to be held in April 1994, will provide relevant inputs into the preparations for the Conference.

80. At the regional level, ILO is participating in activities for the regional conferences and non-governmental organization symposia through the preparation of technical papers on employment and labour issues, through the supply of documentation, and through involvement in task forces and inter-agency meetings. At ILO regional seminars, workshops and other events, the need to highlight women workers' issues in all activities related to the Beijing Conference is stressed.

81. At the national level, ILO advisers and focal points are closely involved in the preparation of national reports. Information kits for national committees are available through field offices. Some field offices participate in informal networks of WID donors, while others have been chosen as focal points for preparatory activities with regard to the regional conferences and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

9. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

82. FAO prepared a section on women's access to lands and natural resources for the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. It also contributed to the section on women's access to credit and financial institutions.

83. FAO's WID focal point, the Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service, has elaborated a programme of activities for the Fourth World Conference on Women that focuses on three areas: food security, food production and food processing. It outlines the contribution that technical divisions, FAO representatives, and the regional offices and ESHW can make towards preparatory activities for the Conference. An information package,

including an information note and guidelines for preparatory activities of FAO and of the Conference secretariat, was widely circulated among FAO staff at headquarters and in the field. The FAO guidelines are supplementary to the guidelines for preparation of national reports of the Conference secretariat. They are targeted at Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development to encourage them to contribute information from the agricultural sector to the national report. FAO field projects have been encouraged to reallocate some funds for specific activities, such as seminars, training, and case-studies, for women at the field level in preparation for the Conference.

84. Funds have been provided for specific regional activities. These include:

(a) Near East: development of a policy framework and regional programme of action for women in agriculture in the Near East, in coordination with member States, donors and non-governmental organizations;

(b) Latin America and the Caribbean: FAO-sponsored regional network of institutions and agencies in support of rural women. The regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean acts as the technical secretariat in providing assistance to subregional networks;

(c) Asia and Pacific: support for a research programme on time use and statistics and on the integration of gender in policy formulation;

(d) Africa: support for activities on data collection and numeracy programmes.

85. In December 1993, the FAO project entitled "Assistance in support of rural women in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women" was initiated. The first phase of the project provides technical assistance to national committees and Ministries of Agriculture with regard to national report preparation. It aims at a comprehensive integration of information and data on rural women and agriculture into the national report, and at the full integration of WID units of Ministries of Agriculture, non-governmental organizations dealing with rural women and the rural women themselves into the whole preparatory process. A total of nine countries have so far obtained technical assistance under this phase of the project. The second phase of the project aims at strengthening national capacity to implement the Platform for Action that will be adopted at the Conference. This phase will cover the period from May 1994 through the Conference and beyond in three main areas: institution-building; technical activities and programmes; and developing of people's organizations and non-governmental organizations.

10. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

86. The primary focus of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the preparations for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women is to ensure that issues of concern to refugee and returnee women are represented in the broader framework of global women's concern, both at the regional preparatory meetings and at the Conference itself.

87. UNHCR has therefore established a field-focused approach that emphasizes country-level consultations with refugee and returnee women and implementing partners to identify specific concerns and areas for action. These will be integrated into regional strategies and eventually into a global UNHCR agenda for action. At all stages, UNHCR is attempting to integrate the concerns of refugee and returnee women into major themes of the Conference while at the same time raising public awareness of issues that are specific to their particular situation.

88. Focal points have been designated with the responsibility for ensuring dissemination of information. UNHCR does not expect to organize special events focused uniquely on 1995. Nevertheless, UNHCR hopes to be able to include a focus in ongoing activities that benefit women. In addition, UNHCR will facilitate the participation of refugee women in the preparatory meetings of the Conference.

89. As regards inter-agency coordination, UNHCR is actively contributing to information-sharing efforts among Geneva-based organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

11. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

90. As a follow-up to the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, 4/ which in paragraph 72 calls for appropriate measures to be taken by the least developed countries fully to mobilize and involve women, both as agents and beneficiaries of the development process in the least developed countries, the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has taken into account the gender-related aspects in its analytical work on the least developed countries, for example, in particular in the relevant sections on education and health services in the forthcoming Least Developed Countries 1993 Report, to be submitted to the Trade and Development Board at the second part of its fortieth session in 1994.

91. As part of the preparatory process leading to the Mid-Term Global Review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, to be held in the latter part of 1995, UNCTAD is planning to organize an expert group meeting on the subject of "Women in development of the least developed countries". The purpose of this event will be to arrive at a better understanding of the role that women play in the development process of the least developed countries and to consider ways to enhance their participation, and contribute thereby to accelerating the development process of those countries in the 1990s. The outcome of the proposed expert group meeting would also provide inputs to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

92. The UNCTAD secretariat, as the focal point for issues on science and technology in the United Nations system, will provide substantive support to the work of the Working Group on Gender and Technology, dealing with the gender implications of science and technology for developing countries, which is currently being organized and prepared for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

93. The Working Group on Gender and Technology constitutes a significant part of the work programme of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development during the period 1993-1995, in preparation for the next session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, to take place in 1995. This Working Group is expected to provide input in the field of women in science and technology to the Fourth World Conference on Women, including input for the Platform for Action.

12. United Nations Educational, Scientific and and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

94. UNESCO's regular budget resources allocated to women-specific activities are substantially increased for the budget biennium 1994-1995. The Executive Board of UNESCO has recommended that 25 per cent of resources made directly available for member States' participation in the execution of UNESCO programmes be allocated to programmes and projects directly benefiting women. The General Conference invited member States to present requests to this end. More emphasis is thereby given to national involvement and national implementation. Some 100 UNESCO national commissions have appointed focal points for women. Through them, as well as through the regional and subregional offices, UNESCO expects, inter alia, to reach a broader constituency of women professionals within UNESCO's spheres of competence, and to stimulate a process oriented towards overcoming the obstacles to the full and equal participation of women in all areas of responsibility of UNESCO.

95. Subregional meetings and activities, initiated by the national commissions in relation to the Fourth World Conference on Women, are foreseen under the participation programme.

96. A new Consultative Committee, which will be chaired by the Director-General, is being established with a view to promoting fresh insights and approaches, formulating new strategies, examining policy guidelines, and preparing a gender-responsive monitoring system as well as UNESCO's contribution to the Beijing Conference, in cooperation with the different programme sectors. A series of consultations are being planned, involving the Consultative Committee, Executive Board members, and members of permanent delegations to UNESCO, as well as national commissions of UNESCO.

97. UNESCO is participating actively in the preparation of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, and of the updated edition of The World's Women.

98. UNESCO's specific activities regarding the Fourth World Conference on Women include:

(a) An international symposium on women and media under preparation for March 1995;

(b) Development of a global framework of activities in support of basic education for girls and women with particular emphasis on Africa, the Arab States, and South Asia;

(c) A set of activities designed to promote the key role women play in the transmission of cultural values;

(d) Organization of an international forum and of round-table meetings, as well as the presentation of an exhibition at the Non-Governmental Organization Forum and the dissemination of information on women's status within UNESCO's field of competence;

(e) A special issue on women in The UNESCO Courier (July/August 1995);

(f) Focus on the education of girls and women in the 1995 edition of UNESCO's World Education Report;

(g) Inclusion of gender components in the 1995 issue of UNESCO's World Science Report.

99. A complete plan for UNESCO's publications and information material for the Conference is being elaborated and will include project reports, updating of existing material, and development of kits, videos, films and posters. There are also plans to establish a small newsletter that, on an ongoing basis, presents the planned and ongoing activities of all UNESCO partners geared towards the Beijing Conference.

13. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

100. UNICEF has issued guidelines to all its offices on UNICEF's involvement in the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women based on the guidelines issued by the Conference secretariat. They provide a summary of the objectives and an outline of the preparatory process and the role expected from UNICEF offices in supporting that preparatory process at all levels. Reports from field offices indicate that UNICEF is closely associated with the national preparatory processes of the national preparatory committees set up by Governments, as well as with the activities of non-governmental organizations.

101. In order to facilitate coordination of UNICEF's activities in the preparatory process, a task force has been established in New York. This task force meets periodically and provides further guidance regarding UNICEF's involvement in Conference preparations.

102. Through the girl child initiative, UNICEF has given high priority attention to the elimination of gender disparities at the early stages of life. In this regard, UNICEF is in the process of preparing a Global Consultation on the Girl Child, which will be held in India, 10-16 February 1994.

103. In addition to directly supporting initiatives at the country level, UNICEF also provides direct support to non-governmental organizations in their preparatory activities for the Conference. For example, UNICEF has provided financial assistance to the African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), which has been selected by African non-governmental organizations to coordinate all non-governmental organization activities in the region. Ways are being identified to extend support to other non-governmental organizations. In

this regard, UNICEF regional offices have been requested to identify focal persons to liaise with regional commissions and other organizations for active involvement in the regional preparatory process.

14. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

104. Two major papers will form the World Bank's substantive contribution to the Beijing Conference: the 1994 Gender Policy Paper to the Governing Board - the first such policy paper for the Bank - and the Special Study, which is to be published for extensive dissemination following the issue of the Policy Paper. The Special Study will include in-depth technical analyses and operational details on the priority areas of the Bank's Gender Programme.

105. The Europe and Central Asia region will be hosting a seminar in the second half of 1994 to disseminate, to client countries, non-governmental organizations and bilateral/multilateral agencies, findings on WID Fund-supported work, namely, on girls' education, labour markets, child care, maternal health, and agrarian reform, and related work.

106. A policy study on education, labour, agriculture, health and nutrition, enterprise development and financial services is currently being written by the Education and Social Policy Department (ESP). The working title is "Enhancing women's contribution to economic development". The paper will be published in 1995.

15. International Monetary Fund (IMF)

107. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has a very specific mandate with regard to international finance. This notwithstanding, the Managing Director of the Fund has expressed his interest in the Fourth World Conference on Women, and his desire, based on the conviction that gender issues are relevant to the Fund's mandate, for Fund staff to monitor Conference development. The Fund therefore participates in the ad hoc inter-agency meetings that are convened by the Conference secretariat, and expects to participate also in the Conference itself.

16. World Health Organization (WHO)

108. In response to the request by member States that the Global Commission on Women's Health, inter alia, provide input to all major international forums, including the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, a document entitled "Human rights in relation to women's health" was presented at the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993. Input will be prepared also for the Fourth World Conference on Women. A notable objective of the WHO working group acting as secretariat to the Global Commission has been first to capitalize on existing knowledge and expertise by ensuring cooperation within technical programmes at all levels, and between WHO and other appropriate bodies of the United Nations system and pertinent non-governmental organizations.

109. An interdivisional Steering Committee on Women, Health and Development was set up in WHO to ensure that the Organization's programmes, as well as the Ninth General Programme of Work, give proper attention to matters affecting women's health in all areas. In order to facilitate the process of incorporating women's perspectives in WHO's general programme of work, a check-list of indicators was developed for programme managers. The Steering Committee also coordinates input into the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

110. Several WHO programme areas have worked to develop strategies to reveal the gender-related aspects of diseases and health conditions. For example, the issue of women and drugs was the subject of a consultation held in August 1993. The results of the consultation will serve as the basis for a United Nations system-wide position paper on women, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS that will constitute a contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

111. Other highlights include an informal working group on gender and health research, which has come together, under the coordination of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, to discuss gender research issues of common concern. One of its activities is the development of a "healthy women counselling guide", for use primarily at the community level.

112. WHO's Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction and its Maternal Health and Safe Motherhood Programme collaborated to establish and foster the integration of women's perspectives into research on human reproduction and into the provision of services for reproductive health. In the context of the meeting of the Medical Women's International Association for Africa and the Near East, the two programmes have jointly organized a workshop to discuss ways and means for ensuring women's input and participation and to establish a network of interested parties.

F. Host-country arrangements

113. A first planning mission to the host country, headed by the Secretary-General of the Conference, and with the participation of representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, took place from 1 to 6 June 1993. The host country was provided with a draft set of estimated requirements of the United Nations for holding the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing. The mission worked with the China Organizing Committee for the Conference, which comprises five functional subcommittees.

114. The planning mission reviewed several possible sites for the Conference and the Non-Governmental Organization Forum. The host country proposed that the opening and closing ceremonies of the Conference take place at the Great Hall of the People. It was proposed that the Conference itself should be held at the Beijing International Convention Centre. With regard to the Non-Governmental Organization Forum, it was considered that the Beijing Workers' Sports Service Centre would be a possible site for its major activities.

115. The Conference secretariat is in constant contact with the host country. The next planning mission to Beijing is expected to take place in May 1994.

G. Intergovernmental activities

116. The Third European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men, which met in Rome, Italy, on 21 and 22 October 1993, adopted a statement on the Fourth World Conference on Women, in which, inter alia, it urged the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Council presents a major contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women. To that end, it invited the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to convene, in anticipation of the Fourth World Conference on Women, a conference focusing on the human rights dimension of equality, as well as on the question of equality and democracy, which is also particularly relevant in the countries in transition in Europe. It is anticipated that that conference will take place in the course of 1994.

117. The Fourth Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs, held in Nicosia, Cyprus, from 5 to 9 July 1993, discussed, inter alia, preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. A message of the Ministers on the key strategic issues was submitted to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in October 1993. In their message, the Ministers expressed, inter alia, their belief that as they prepared for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Commonwealth, in view of its members' common history and fundamental political values, could serve as a model to the rest of the world of the furthering, through integrated, practical action, of the goals of full equality for women. The Commonwealth Heads of Government received the message warmly. They expressed support for the actions proposed by the Ministers.

118. The Meeting of the Standing Ministerial Committee for Economic Cooperation of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Bali from 10 to 13 May 1993, in its final document (A/48/338, annex) considered the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women to be an important opportunity for strengthening global commitment towards the advancement of women. In this regard, it emphasized the need for non-aligned and other developing countries to participate effectively in the preparatory process and in the Conference itself. Towards the early implementation of the decision of the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries gathered at the Tenth Summit Meeting of their Movement in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 1 to 6 September 1992 (see document A/47/675, annex), the Standing Ministerial Committee urged the convening of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, to be devoted to the role of women in development, for the purpose of coordinating the positions of the non-aligned countries.

119. The Twenty-sixth (XXVI) Assembly of the Inter-American Commission of Women, on 23 October 1992, adopted a resolution on preparations leading to 1995. It stated that the Inter-American Commission of Women, as a specialized agency of the Organization of American States (OAS), should assist countries in their preparations. It approved guidelines to prepare for the mid-decade regional evaluation of the advancement achieved by women.

H. Non-governmental organizations

120. During the past year, the Planning Committee for Non-Governmental Organization Activities for the 1995 Non-Governmental Organization Forum and the Fourth World Conference on Women made arrangements for a number of activities. A Consultation held at the time of the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women brought together persons from more than 100 organizations and all regions of the world. The workshops focused on developing strategies for action leading to regional forums and the 1995 Non-Governmental Organization Forum. Many recommendations were made to enhance the flow of information both to interested non-governmental organizations and from non-governmental organizations to national Governments and United Nations entities. A major emphasis was placed on opening global participation in the process leading to the Beijing Conference to as many groups and organizations as possible. A report on the Consultation was widely distributed. In September 1993, Ms. Supatra Masdit, a Thailand national, was appointed Convener of the Planning Committee. A new Executive Director was scheduled to assume her responsibilities on 1 February 1994. Since the last report, another 20 organizations have joined the Planning Committee.

121. The secretariat for the Planning Committee was moved from Vienna to New York and is preparing arrangements for non-governmental organization activities in connection with the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. This non-governmental organization Consultation will be opened with a briefing on the status of preparations and documentation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be followed by two weeks of activities initiated by the participants. Based on the requests received from non-governmental organizations, a series of workshops, seminars, and other events are scheduled to take place.

122. Inquiries about participation in the Beijing Conference and the 1995 Non-Governmental Organization Forum are arriving from many sources. It has been agreed among the interested groups that participation in the regional meetings is essential. The Asian and Pacific Non-Governmental Organization Working Group, based in Bangkok, worked with ESCAP and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women to organize the Asian and Pacific Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations, held in Manila in November 1993. The Working Group was instrumental in designing the programme and in ensuring the presence of a wide range of non-governmental organization representatives from the entire region.

123. Planning is under way for activities in connection with the five regional preparatory conferences, which are scheduled to take place in 1994. The Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference will receive the findings of the Manila Symposium.

124. The Planning Committee, in cooperation with the three non-governmental organization committees on the status of women (New York, Vienna and Geneva), will organize a consultation in connection with the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1995. The members of the Planning Committee are also involved in working with their Chinese colleagues in preparation for the 1995 Non-Governmental Organization Forum in Beijing to

ensure appropriate facilities for the many anticipated activities, such as workshops, symposia, films and cultural events.

125. A representative of the non-governmental organization community participated in the first planning mission to Beijing, led by the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Discussions as to the possible site for the Non-Governmental Organization Forum were held with the Chinese hosts.

II. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO CONFERENCE PREPARATIONS

126. The General Assembly, in its resolution 47/95, recommended that the Commission on the Status of Women, as the preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference on Women, should consider at its next session the relevance of the resolutions drafted at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held in 1985, in order to avoid duplication of work, keeping in mind that those resolutions had been neither adopted by the Conference nor considered by the Assembly.

127. The Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 37/7, section VI, reiterated its request, contained in its resolution 35/4, that the Secretary-General present to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session a report on existing technical and financial cooperation targeting programmes in favour of women, as well as guidelines for a comprehensive plan to overcome constraints and increase such cooperation. Owing to the move of the Division for the Advancement of Women from Vienna to New York, work on that report has been delayed in the United Nations Secretariat. At the same time, the United Nations Secretariat has been able to secure the financial and/or technical cooperation of UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Bank in compiling the report, which is expected to be finalized in the second quarter of 1994.

128. The Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 37/7, section VI, also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report for the Commission at its thirty-eighth session on institutional arrangements for the implementation of the Platform for Action and for the programme on advancement of women and an appraisal of options for considering the agenda item at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Section VI of the draft Platform for Action will contain recommendations on institutional arrangements for the Platform's implementation. The report requested will be prepared in the light of further discussion on this section of the draft Platform for Action and will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session in 1995.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Social Statistics and Indicators, Series K, No. 8 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.3).

3/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

4/ Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 3-14 September 1990 (A/CONF.147/18), part one.

Annex

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1994-1995

1994

24-28 January	Women's world banking expert group meeting on women and finance New York
31 January-11 March	Fiftieth session of the Commission on Human Rights Geneva
1-5 February	Consultative meeting on youth involvement in the Fourth World Conference on Women Princeton, New Jersey
3-4 March	Eighteenth inter-agency meeting on women New York
3-4 March	Non-governmental organization Consultation New York
2-18 March	Non-governmental organization panels and workshops New York
7-18 March	Thirty-eighth session of the Commission of the Status of Women New York
April	ILO International Forum on Equality for Women in a Changing World
4-22 April	Third session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development New York
6-7 April	Meeting on Women, co-sponsored by ECLAC and the Inter-American Development Bank Guadalajara, Mexico
11-15 April	European Union Conference in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women Toledo, Spain
7-14 June	Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development (regional preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women) Jakarta, Indonesia

1-6 August	Nordic Forum Turku, Finland
22 August-2 September	Second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development New York
Third quarter	Non-governmental organization/ECE symposium (proposed) Geneva
September	UNESCO international meeting of experts on violence and sexual exploitation Seoul, Republic of Korea
4-8 September	Regional Expert Group Meeting on Women in Development (Western Asia) Amman, Jordan
5-13 September	International Conference on Population and Development Cairo, Egypt
September	Regional Non-Governmental Organization Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean Mar del Plata, Argentina
26-30 September	Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory conference Mar del Plata, Argentina
17-21 October	European regional preparatory conference Vienna, Austria
October	Regional Non-Governmental Organization Forum for Europe (proposed) Vienna, Austria
6-10 November	Western Asian regional preparatory conference Amman, Jordan
14-17 November	Regional Non-Governmental Organization Forum for Africa Dakar, Senegal
16-23 November	African regional preparatory conference Dakar, Senegal
	INSTRAW Interregional Conference on Women, Environment and Health Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

1995

16-27 January	Third substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development
15 January-2 February	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
30 January-10 March	Commission on Human Rights Geneva
February	Council of Europe Conference in anticipation of the Fourth World Conference on Women: "Democracy and equality: challenge or utopia"
March	UNESCO international symposium on women and the media
6-12 March	World Summit for Social Development Copenhagen
9-10 March	Nineteenth inter-agency meeting on women New York
9-24 March	Non-governmental organization Consultation and meetings New York
13-24 March	Thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women New York
30 August-8 September	Non-Governmental Organization Forum Beijing, China
4-15 September	Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing, China

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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Thirty-eighth session
New York, 7-18 March 1994
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Draft Platform for Action

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 37/7, the Commission on the Status of Women requested the Secretary-General to prepare, and to present to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session, a draft of the Platform for Action, following the structure and guidelines set out in the annex to the resolution and in the results of the meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission. The Commission emphasized that the Platform for Action should be concise and accessible and should accelerate, through concerted and intensive action in the coming years, the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in critical areas so that equality becomes a reality by the twenty-first century.

2. The Inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission met from 10 to 14 January 1994. The Working Group discussed the draft structure and a number of suggestions for improvement were made.

3. As requested, a first draft of the Platform for Action has been prepared (see annex). It is based generally on the structure set out in the annex to resolution 37/7, but includes a new section on the global framework for the Platform for Action, as was agreed to by the Working Group. In addition, the Working Group suggested adding the following areas as critical areas of concern: (a) insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society and (b) lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment.

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* E/CN.6/1994/1.

4. The current draft provides narratives for the sections on statement of mission, the global framework and critical areas of concern on the basis of the comments made by Governments during the meeting of the Working Group, contributions from organizations of the United Nations system, results of seminars and workshops on priority themes presented to the Commission since 1987, the preliminary results of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development and initial thinking about the second review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies.

5. The draft provides an approach to elaborating strategic objectives and the action to be taken to achieve them. It is proposed that a further draft of the Platform for Action be elaborated based on the deliberations of the Commission at its thirty-eighth session, the results of the regional preparatory conferences, additional technical meetings (particularly in terms of the priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission) and an expert group meeting to be held in late 1994.

6. With regard to institutional and financial arrangements, the draft proposes a general approach which should be further elaborated over the next year.

Annex

DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	STATEMENT OF MISSION	1	5
II.	GLOBAL FRAMEWORK	2 - 9	5
III.	CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN	10 - 55	6
	A. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels	10 - 12	6
	B. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women	13 - 18	7
	C. Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights	19 - 23	8
	D. The persistent and growing burden of poverty on women	24 - 28	9
	E. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself	29 - 33	9
	F. Inequality in access to education, health and related services and means of maximizing the use of women's capacities	34 - 39	10
	G. Violence against women	40 - 43	11
	H. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women	44 - 46	12
	I. Insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society	47 - 50	12
	J. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment	51 - 55	13

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
IV.	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DERIVED FROM THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN	56 - 90	14
	A. Strengthening factors that promote the full participation of women in power structures and decision-making at all levels	57 - 59	14
	B. Applying and enforcing international norms and standards to safeguard the human rights of women .	60 - 62	15
	C. Promoting women's economic self-reliance, including access to and control over economic resources - land, capital and technology	63 - 65	16
	D. Eliminating the factors that accentuate poverty among women and prevent them from overcoming the circumstances that keep them in that situation ...	66 - 69	16
	E. Ensuring women's access to quality education and training for self-reliance	70 - 72	17
	F. Increasing women's full access throughout the life cycle to health and related services	73 - 75	18
	G. Eliminating violence against women	76 - 78	18
	H. Increasing the participation of women in conflict resolution and protecting women in international armed and other kinds of conflict	79 - 81	19
	I. Mobilizing information so as to integrate gender considerations into policy and programme planning and implementation at all levels	82 - 84	20
	J. Using the communications media effectively to promote equality between women and men	85 - 87	20
	K. Promoting action to develop the mutual responsibility of women and men to achieve equality	88 - 90	21
V.	FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS	91	21
VI.	INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION	92	21

I. STATEMENT OF MISSION

1. The Platform for Action aims to accelerate the removal of the remaining obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including economic and political decision-making; to protect women's human rights throughout the life cycle, and to mainstream women in all areas of sustainable development so that men and women can work together for equality, development and peace. For this purpose, the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are called upon to undertake strategic action to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in critical areas of concern.

II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2. Since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in 1985, the world has been experiencing a global process of restructuring of political, economic, social and cultural relationships. This restructuring process has had a profound impact, both positive and negative, on women, and forms the backdrop for this Platform for Action.

3. Changes in political relationships have reduced the threat of global conflict and increased the importance of multilateral solutions to political problems. While the threat of global conflict has been reduced, a resurgence of nationalism and ethnic conflict have threatened the peace in many areas. They have also led to the expansion of the role of the United Nations in humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping.

4. The move towards democratization has been coupled with a renewed emphasis on the implementation of universal human rights. The recognition by the World Conference on Human Rights that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights has meant that the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community. However, much remains to be done nationally and internationally to monitor and enforce women's human rights.

5. Economic relationships are also changing. The prolonged global economic recession has led to a restructuring of the economic relationships between countries and, in some regions, a decline in national as well as personal income and well-being. It has been accompanied by a growing reliance on market economies. The role of transnational corporations has increased. New areas of economic growth have emerged, especially in areas related to new technologies in information, health and related services. Global patterns of employment have been changing and women have begun to form the labour force in new growth sectors in all regions. At the same time, the capacity to provide services and make long-term investments through the public sector has been reduced, and poverty, both absolute and relative, has increased, accompanied by widespread migration of both women and men in search of employment.

6. Evidence of accelerating depletion of natural resources and other environmental problems has resulted in a global consensus on the need to see development in terms of sustainability over the long term. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development identified women as key actors in the management and protection of natural resources, particularly in rural areas.

7. There has been renewed attention to human development seen in terms of the life cycle of the individual, progressing from childhood and youth through old age, and people's needs at different stages should be taken into account in policies and planning. There is a recognition that the generations are interdependent, that the youth of today will be the ageing of tomorrow and that the older generation transmits enduring values to the new generation.

8. As societies are being transformed, so too are the relationships between women and men. Differences between women's and men's achievements and participation are recognized as the result of socially constructed gender roles rather than biological differences. The sexual division of labour between productive roles and reproductive roles has become increasingly blurred as women have entered the workplace in growing numbers and their productive contribution in other spheres has received greater recognition, and as men have taken greater responsibility for domestic tasks, including the care of children. A focus on gender roles rather than on women alone is needed to emphasize the evolving partnership between men and women in a changing world.

9. Notably, despite common problems, the world is not homogeneous, and there are regional and national differences. But these differences are often a matter of degree rather than essence, a matter of resources and capacity available for solution rather than characteristic of the problems to be solved. Women are not a homogeneous group and there are differences among women with different life experiences. Young women, ageing women, disabled, migrant, refugee or displaced women all have special concerns. However, they also share many of the same concerns derived from their gender. As a result, both the diversity and the commonality of women's experience, knowledge, vision and hopes constitute a source of strength and the basis for believing that the mission of this Platform for Action can be achieved.

III. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

A. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

10. More women are serving as heads of State or Government, ministers, members of parliament, mayors and members of city councils than ever before. Yet, women still lack equal access to power structures that shape society. In a period of increasing democratization, women make up at least half of the voters in almost all countries, and have had the right to vote and hold office for more than a generation. Yet, they are not full participants in the public choices that affect their lives. All but a few countries are far from achieving the target set by the Economic and Social Council of 30 per cent women in decision-making levels by 1995. Nor do women participate fully in the leadership of international organizations, as top-level diplomats, in transnational

corporations and banks, in the military, the police or in peace-keeping. Yet, without women's full participation, democracy cannot be achieved or maintained. Experience has shown that women can make a difference by casting their votes and affecting the outcomes of electoral processes for change.

11. The continuing gap between women's de jure equality and the reality of women's lives and exclusion from power comes from many sources, and societies differ greatly. For example, in most countries, the norms and practices of political activity suit male lifestyles more than women's. Women often have had little opportunity to compete fairly for leadership positions. Negative stereotypes have discouraged some women from such roles.

12. Inequality in the public arena is often matched by, and often starts with, inequality within the household. Yet, in some societies there have been gains in domestic partnership and role-sharing. Experience has shown that measures can be taken to increase power-sharing in the home, where children first witness gender relations.

B. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

13. Effective mechanisms are needed at the international, regional, national and community levels to serve as catalysts for promoting the advancement of women. In most countries, the mechanisms established do not have the capacity in terms of financial and human resources to perform this function successfully.

14. National machineries for the advancement of women have been created in almost every country of the world. Diverse in form, they provide a tool for the advancement of women through advocacy, monitoring of public policies and mobilizing support. Women's organizations, including grass-roots women's groups, professional associations, women's networks and other non-governmental organizations, have demonstrated success in effectively and forcefully mobilizing women, especially at the community level, in both rural and urban areas.

15. While there has been an improvement in the development and use of statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, their coverage is by no means complete. The availability of this information can provide the base for compelling analysis of gender aspects, leading to action.

16. However, these national machineries are often marginalized in national government structures; they are understaffed and under-funded, and are often unable to mobilize the information and clout necessary for advocacy and monitoring, or for linking with grass-roots organizations. At the international level, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, as part of mainstream political, developmental or human rights activities, experience the same problems as national machineries.

17. Without strong and powerful women's institutions at all levels, mainstreaming women's concerns in public policies and programmes will be ineffective. Without sources of information about the gender-specific impacts

of public actions, programmes are weakened. Without a focus for mobilizing the efforts of grass-roots organizations, their efforts can be dissipated.

18. Experience in many countries shows that strong national machinery, complemented by institutions at the community level, can accelerate the process of change for women. The existence of strong and active women's organizations provides a basis for reaching out from international, national and community levels to mobilize women for change.

C. Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights

19. International standards to prevent discrimination against women are in place. The World Conference on Human Rights emphasized that women's rights were an integral part of the mainstream of universal, inalienable and indivisible human rights. However, unless these standards are fully applied, interpreted and enforced in civil, penal and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist only in name. Lack of awareness, as well as means for enjoyment, of these rights are critical obstacles.

20. Recognition of women's human rights is reflected in the fact that over two thirds of the world's States are party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including all of the countries in some regions. Indeed, in most countries, steps have been taken to reflect these rights in law. Women are increasingly using the legal system to exercise these rights.

21. However, in the countries that have not become party to the Convention or where serious reservations have been entered, or where national laws have not been changed to conform with international norms, women's de jure equality is not yet secured. In other countries, lack of enforcement of civil, penal and commercial codes or administrative rules and regulations means that the enjoyment of women of their rights is far less than that of men.

22. The gap between having rights and enjoying them derives in part from a lack of knowledge by women and men alike about those rights and a lack of commitment by Governments to enforce them. It also results from unresponsive legal systems, overly complex administrative procedures, insensitive judicial personnel and inadequate monitoring of the violation of the human rights of women. There is a lack of appropriate recourse mechanisms at the national and international levels. Inadequate resources for institutions monitoring the violation of the human rights of women at the international level, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, compounds the problem.

23. Experience in many countries has shown that women can be mobilized around the struggle to enjoy their rights, regardless of level of education or socio-economic status. Legal literacy programmes have been shown to be effective in helping women understand the link between their rights and other aspects of their lives and in demonstrating that cost-effective institutions can be created to help women obtain those rights.

D. The persistent and growing burden of poverty on women

24. The heavy burdens of poverty generally fall disproportionately on women because women are less likely to have sufficient access to the economic and other resources necessary to improve their lives. The number of rural women living in absolute poverty is increasing at a faster rate than for men and the proportion of women among the poor is growing in all societies.

25. There has been little progress in eradicating the worst forms of poverty over the past 10 years. The effects of prolonged global economic recession, combined with adjustment programmes that have undermined the capacity of Governments to provide for the basic needs of their populations, have also undermined anti-poverty initiatives. This situation, coupled with civil strife in many parts of the world, has resulted in an overall increase in the proportion of households living in poverty and in the number of people in absolute poverty.

26. Poverty affects households as a whole, but within them women bear a disproportionate share of the burden. Women experience poverty differently from men because of differences in their entitlement and responsibility. Women must manage household consumption under situations of increasing scarcity or obtain remunerated employment in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector, and, in so doing, they make the invisible adjustment necessary to cope with poverty.

27. There has been a significant increase in the number of female-headed households, the majority of which are poor, with dependants young and old. Lacking education, health and other support services, and not having access to economic resources, these poor women confront significant obstacles to improving their situation. If they are unable to emerge from poverty, the cycle tends to be perpetuated through their children. In the absence of programmes to attenuate the effects of poverty, these families are likely to remain among the poorest of the poor.

28. Experience has shown that public policies and private initiatives that take account of women's skills and potential by providing the resources and opportunities they need to bring themselves out of poverty can help provide a basis for national economic growth with equity.

E. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself

29. Women lack equal access to, and control over, land, capital, technology and other means of production owing to the predominant division of labour between men and women in most societies. Consequently, women have been largely excluded from the shaping of economic structures and policies. At the same time, women's labour, which has contributed significantly to economic development, has generally been underpaid, undervalued and unrecognized.

30. Women have always contributed to national economies. They are the primary producers of food, constitute an increasing proportion of the economically

active population, provide the skilled labour for economic sectors showing the fastest growth, and are increasingly the owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises.

31. However, women are infrequently part of the process of decision-making about economic structures and policies, either nationally or internationally, and are not well-represented in financial and other key economic institutions. In large enterprises, whether public or private, they are largely absent at management levels. Women tend to be segregated in a limited number of occupations, where pay is lower than for equivalent work by men. The value of their unremunerated contribution to the economy, whether in family enterprises or in domestic work, is unrecognized and not reflected in national accounts.

32. In most of the world, business has been considered a male preserve, reinforced by stereotypes and discriminatory practices. Women have lacked access to critical economic factors such as ownership of land, credit and training in technology. Women's opportunities have been limited by discriminatory laws, inadequate education and training, inadequate sharing of domestic responsibilities, including child care, and inflexible working environments. The skills women have obtained as a result of their experience in household management, working in the informal sector and in the community has not been valued. Women doing remunerated work have largely been relegated to low-paying, low-prestige jobs and to the unregulated informal sector where exploitation is often easy.

33. Experience has shown that when women are given access to credit they apply it effectively. Given access to resources, technology and training, women can take the lead in expanding production. Women's skills at performing many tasks simultaneously, their discipline and their ability to adjust to new situations constitute a major underutilized resource for development which can be released if economic structures and policies can be made responsive to them.

F. Inequality in access to education, health and related services and means of maximizing the use of women's capacities

34. Education is a key to development, but despite this the educational opportunities offered to women have often contributed to reinforcing traditional female roles, denying them full partnership in society. There is growing awareness that educating women has a major impact on social change and is a worthwhile investment. Such education must be responsive to the practical needs of women and include training in science and technology and modern communications. Education is a necessary tool for women to continue to be agents of change.

35. In most regions of the world, girls and boys now have the same access to primary and secondary education and, in some regions, equality in enrolment is being achieved in tertiary education. Despite this, almost a billion people, two thirds of them women, are still illiterate and the benefits of more equal access to education will not be felt for some time. In other regions, girls still suffer discrimination in access to education and training and reductions

in spending on education and health services as a result of structural adjustment.

36. For girls entering school, the fundamental question is whether they will receive quality education that will prepare them to enter any field, expose them to science and technology, stimulate their creativity, and build up their self-esteem, and that is structured to keep them from dropping out prematurely. For adult women, the challenge is to provide education and training that is cost-effective and can help them overcome the consequences of past discrimination which often left them lacking in essential skills. Experience in many countries has shown that investment in education of women and girls pays significant dividends in economic growth, improved health and quality of life for women and men alike.

37. Progress has also been made in making primary health care available, and new technologies make the prevention and treatment of many medical problems more feasible than ever before. However, reductions in spending on health services as a result of structural adjustment has halted progress in providing needed services in many countries. Lack of treatment of health problems primarily affecting women place women as a group at risk. When combined with lack of family-planning and other health-related services, the inadequate situation is reflected in high rates of maternal mortality, malnutrition, anaemia and too early and too frequent pregnancies.

38. To this is added the scourge of HIV/AIDS, which is affecting women at an increasing rate along with newborns. Women are often not able to insist on safe sex practices and have little access to information on prevention. The consequences of HIV/AIDS reach beyond women's health to their role as caretakers of the sick and destitute. The social, developmental and health consequences of AIDS need to be seen through a gender perspective, but this is not always the case.

39. Society has much to gain from investments in education, health, family planning and child- and dependant-care services, for they are investments in the future of both women and men. Experience has shown that when such services are available, women are able to contribute their creativity and skills to the public good.

G. Violence against women

40. Violence against women is a global problem. It takes various forms in both public and private life, and has been recognized as a violation of basic human rights, instilling fear and insecurity in women's lives.

41. Violence against women derives essentially from the lower status accorded to women in the family and in society. Physical, psychological or sexual violence, whether occurring in the home or in society, is linked to male power, privilege and control. It is abetted by ignorance, lack of laws to prohibit violence, inadequate efforts by public authorities to enforce existing laws, and absence of educational and other means to address its causes. The absence of

adequate statistics about incidence make elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult.

42. Violence against women has entered public debate and is now condemned as a violation of the human rights of women. It is a growing concern of men and women alike and has been condemned internationally in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in general recommendations 12 and 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and by other international bodies.

43. Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilized to fight against violence in all its forms and that effective public measures can be taken to address both the consequences and the causes of violence.

H. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women

44. Women seldom perpetrate national and international armed and other kinds of conflict, and are almost never involved in the decisions leading to such conflict. Nevertheless, they bear a disproportionate share of the consequences of these conflicts, and conflict resolution at this level has remained largely a male domain.

45. Everyone caught up in armed conflicts is affected, but women are affected in particular ways, largely as a reflection of their status in society. They are seldom combatants themselves, lack protection and are often left with the responsibility of maintaining families when conflict disrupts or destroys social and economic life. They have been victims of such practices as torture, disappearance and systematic rape as a weapon of war. Women are disproportionately represented, with their children, among refugees and displaced persons. They are subject to violence or threats of violence or sexual abuse.

46. There is little evidence to confirm whether women in leadership positions would act differently from men in initiating conflict, but there is considerable evidence that women have different approaches to resolving conflict which can be brought to bear both nationally and internationally.

I. Insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society

47. The world is undergoing a communications revolution in which new images and ideas reach into the far corners of the world. New technologies offer the promise of greater interaction among people. These technologies are powerful tools that can be used either for social progress or to reinforce stereotypes.

48. In many countries, the public image of women is changing because of the positive images of women being projected. There are also increasing numbers of women involved in the communications media.

49. On the whole, however, the mass media in most countries still rely on stereotyped images of women and do not provide an accurate picture of women's roles and value in a changing world, but reinforce outdated perceptions of women's roles. Whether public or private, the mass media are still controlled primarily by men and reflect, in many ways, their values and perceptions. These include images of violence and dominance, which have an impact on viewers young and old.

50. Experience in some countries in which efforts have been made to portray women's contributions accurately shows that the mass media can be a significant force for reinforcing change and promoting equality. The possibilities of using communications technology to link women nationally and internationally have been demonstrated in a number of pilot efforts.

J. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment

51. Managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment are the responsibilities of everyone, and the consequences of environmental degradation affect everyone as well. Women's deep concern for the quality and sustainability of the natural systems that sustain life is an intimate part of women's lives. This concern takes root in their daily reality, their experience as persons primarily responsible for obtaining fuel and water in much of the world and their role in managing the consumption patterns of the household. It also takes root in their concern for the future generations they bear.

52. The preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development showed that women were concerned with the environment and had unique experiences that could help develop national and international programmes and policies. This has been reflected in Agenda 21.

53. However, women have been largely absent from decision-making about the environment. The enthusiasm and experience brought by women has not been applied to environmental decision-making and management.

54. In a world of accelerating resource depletion which results in diminished agricultural production, desertification and dislocation, the expertise and knowledge of all is required. Despite the close interaction between the environment and women's daily lives, environmental policies typically have not been formulated with this in mind and technical solutions that have been proposed have not taken this perspective into account. As a result, women have tended to suffer the effects of environmental degradation rather than enabled to bring their perspectives and experience to bear to protect natural resources.

55. Experience in many countries has shown that when women have been involved in environmental management, protection and conservation, they can be a decisive factor in the success of programmes and initiatives.

IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DERIVED FROM THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN

56. The critical areas of concern cut across the boundaries of equality, development and peace. They reflect the interdependence of these goals, which were set out for the United Nations Decade for Women. The strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken are also cross-cutting. The themes of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace require efforts to address both the practical and the strategic needs of women. Action may be taken by the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations, other community organizations, the private sector and individuals.

[Note by the Secretariat: The elaboration of the action to be taken to achieve the strategic objectives should be done by drawing on, especially, the results of the earlier deliberations of the Commission on priority themes, the discussions during the thirty-eighth session of the Commission and in the Inter-sessional Working Group convened in January 1994, the results of the regional preparatory conferences and additional technical meetings (particularly in terms of the priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission). The proposals shown under each objective are meant to suggest possible lines of action for the Commission to discuss and to provide guidance to the Secretariat for the next draft Platform for Action.]

A. Strengthening factors that promote the full participation of women in power structures and decision-making at all levels

57. Action by Governments might include adopting specific measures (for example, targets, goals, quotas or other temporary special measures) corresponding to the national tradition, culture and stage of development to ensure women's equal access to power and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, especially at the highest levels, and in non-traditional areas such as finance, security and foreign affairs. It might include adopting special administrative instructions and regulations, creating monitoring mechanisms such as ombudsmen and training of decision makers to ensure equal representation, equal career development opportunities and equal treatment of women in the civil service. It might also involve developing incentives for the private sector in order to encourage entrepreneurs to follow equality principles. It might include appointing women in equal number with men to represent their countries as ambassadors, governmental delegates, commissioners and chief negotiators; and seconding them to political posts in international and regional organizations, including high positions in such areas as peace-keeping and conflict resolution. It could also include collecting and disseminating data on the participation of women in decision-making; using existing forums of education and training to raise awareness of women's discrimination in this area and the necessity for change; combating women's biased image in the media and replacing it with a positive one, focusing on women as full citizens. It could include programmes to encourage women to undertake education and training that is conducive to participation in politics, including decision-making.

58. Action by non-governmental organizations and private institutions might include action to support and sponsor the participation of women in political parties, trade unions and other similar organizations, at all levels, including the decision-making level; to influence political parties to train and encourage women to become candidates in local and national elections and to acquire leadership capacities. It could also include steps to provide information and training enabling women to learn about the political process; to raise public awareness of women's contribution to the public good and society and to enhance the understanding of the need for equal access of women to power; to campaign actively against degrading images and representation of women in the media, as well as prevailing discriminatory practices.

59. Action by the United Nations system might include further action to correct the low representation of women in the United Nations system, in particular at the decision-making level, through preferential recruitment, promotion and other special measures, to increase the proportion of women at all levels so as to achieve equality by the year 2000.

B. Applying and enforcing international norms and standards to safeguard the human rights of women

60. Action by Governments to address this objective might include ratification of, or accession to, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, if they have not done so, limiting the extent of any reservations and reconsidering and removing substantive reservations, in particular those which are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention, with a view to strengthening it and its effective implementation through the adoption and adjustment of all necessary legislative, administrative and other measures. Further action might include reform of the judicial system to make it more responsive to women, and establishing and strengthening institutions, such as ombudsmen, in order to help women pursue their rights, while recognizing that it is the right of each State to choose the framework that is best suited to its particular needs at the national level. Further action might include supplying pertinent information on the situation of women de jure and de facto in all reports to human rights treaty bodies and widely disseminating information on women's human rights in the national context.

61. Action by non-governmental organizations might include undertaking campaigns to increase women's legal literacy, organizing paralegal assistance programmes and other forms of assistance to women using the judicial system, and undertaking independent monitoring of government compliance with international norms. Further action might include training of trainers in order to facilitate wider dissemination of legal literacy with a gender perspective. Action might also include access to the media by non-governmental organizations in order to create public awareness of women's rights and to publicize women's rights campaigns and legal reforms.

62. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include improving the servicing of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and integrating women's concerns into the work of all other human rights mechanisms. Further action might include organizing campaigns for

universal ratification of, and accession to, the Convention and, in consultation with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, considering opening a dialogue with States that have not yet acceded to the Convention, in order to identify obstacles and to seek ways of overcoming them. Consideration could be given to introducing the right of petition through the preparation of an optional protocol to the Convention to provide for a complaints procedure and to increasing resources to provide for training, advisory services and technical assistance in the implementation of the Convention. Other action might include steps to strengthen coordination between United Nations bodies concerned with the human rights of women.

C. Promoting women's economic self-reliance, including access to and control over economic resources - land, capital and technology

63. Action by Governments to address this objective might include revising legislation as well as administrative rules and procedures to ensure equal opportunities for working women and men, to promote safer working conditions, to guarantee availability of child-care centres and crêches for mothers and fathers in the formal and informal sectors, to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value, to avoid the bias towards the feminization of part-time work, and to promote self-employment as well as technical training in new fields and guidance among unemployed young women. It could include development of government programmes to provide accessible credit to women as well as facilitation of marketing of products.

64. Action by non-governmental organizations, including the private sector and trade unions, might include supporting women in choosing non-traditional professions, encouraging women towards leadership positions, monitoring recruitment, training and promotion bodies and procedures, and promoting rules to prevent sexual harassment at work. It could include organizing entrepreneurial training and self-help financial institutions, such as cooperatives.

65. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include promoting the exchange of information on successful policies and programmes and producing technical material on how to change discriminatory practices. It might also include further efforts to build gender factors into development assistance, including lending, technology transfer and technical cooperation.

D. Eliminating the factors that accentuate poverty among women and prevent them from overcoming the circumstances that keep them in that situation

66. Action by Governments, non-governmental organizations and organizations of the United Nations system alike might include policy statements that recognize that the experience of poverty and the consequences of poverty are different for women and men and incorporate this in the design and implementation of poverty alleviation policies and programmes. Development professionals could be trained in that respect, including the need to take into account the varying

compositions, structures and dynamics of households. Special measures could be directed towards female-headed households. Quantitative and qualitative indicators could be developed to assess the magnitude and severity of poverty among women, including gender-sensitive indicators in household income and expenditure surveys, information on women's informal work and women's time use, returns to labour and poverty differentials by age.

67. Governments might enact laws that remove barriers to the economic participation of poor women, particularly as they relate to property rights, asset holding, inheritance laws, credit policies, and labour and zoning laws. Financial institutions could develop programmes to reach out to low-income women entrepreneurs and producers in rural and urban areas. They could enforce, to the extent possible, minimum wage legislation, occupational safety measures and social security. They might recognize the importance of the informal sector, which is a major source of economic activity for women in both rural and urban areas. Women in the informal sector could be assisted in getting access to markets, credit and training, especially in entrepreneurship. They might establish or improve retraining schemes, providing equal access for women, and provide incentives for poor parents to educate girls and for women to enter non-traditional occupations. They might take steps to involve poor women in the design of programmes intended to benefit them.

68. Action by non-governmental organizations might include promoting self-help organizations at the grass-roots level, including community-based day care and training.

69. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include analysing and publicizing programmes that have had success in addressing poverty and undertaking analyses of the impact on women's poverty of development programmes and projects.

E. Ensuring women's access to quality education and training for self-reliance

70. Action by Governments might include making the necessary expenditure so that all girls can be enrolled in and complete primary education on the same basis as boys. Reform of educational curricula could be adopted to ensure that education is gender-neutral, and gender awareness should be integrated into all aspects of teacher-training programmes to eliminate gender stereotyping. Basic literacy and functional literacy programmes should be made available to all women and girls, and positive action taken to promote women's interest in scientific and technical education, encouraging women to enter non-traditional fields.

71. Action by non-governmental organizations might include monitoring the extent to which educational reforms favouring gender equity are implemented. It might also include activities such as community-based informal training in functional literacy, civic education and income-generating skills for adult women.

72. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include gender-awareness programmes for all officers engaged in designing and implementing non-formal education and training and an increase in the proportion of women fieldworkers and those engaged in rural extension programmes. Development assistance could be given by agencies to the production of training resources and programmes that meet gender-sensitive criteria. Agencies should also ensure that positions for internships and trainee programmes are filled by equal numbers of women and men.

F. Increasing women's full access throughout the life cycle to health and related services

73. Action by Governments to address this objective might include providing adequate financing to ensure the availability of primary health services to all by the year 2000, with a review of women's health needs in establishing programmes. Steps might be taken to provide universal family-planning services, as well as accessible information available in the area of sexual health, particularly measures to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among women. Measures might also be taken to ensure that free health educational materials and health services are available in all educational institutions.

74. Action by non-governmental organizations might include non-formal health education and advisory services for women and girls at the community level, giving particular emphasis to women's traditional health knowledge and providing outreach to the urban poor and rural women who do not have access to government services.

75. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include an increase in the proportion of assistance in the area of health, which has recently stagnated, with particular focus on the health of women and girls and by promoting the training of more female health workers.

G. Eliminating violence against women

76. Action by Governments to address this objective could include reviewing existing legislation with a view to making necessary changes to deal with violence, including such action as finding appropriate sanctions for domestic violence. It could provide training and orientation to police and judicial personnel, doctors, family-planning social workers, nurses and others to recognize abuses perpetrated against women. It could include providing support to shelters and other measures to address the consequences of violence. It could also involve developing national strategies to address the causes of violence through the education system and the mass media. It could include integrated data collection on violence against women in all fields.

77. Action by non-governmental organizations might include organizing shelters and support groups and undertaking campaigns against violence. They could analyse proposed legislation and use the findings to mobilize public opinion about the proposals. They could provide legal assistance for women confronting violence.

78. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include supporting the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and monitoring the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, including statistics and indicators on violence. It could include evaluating the impact of violence against women on society, as well as its cost on human and monetary resources. It could include monitoring the follow-up to policies and practices to address discrimination against women, sexual harassment and other gender-based violence by United Nations system personnel.

H. Increasing the participation of women in conflict resolution and protecting women in international armed and other kinds of conflict

79. Action by Governments to address this objective could include involving an equal proportion of women in peace negotiations and conflict resolution. It could include redirecting possible savings from defense budgets to development. It might involve reflecting in legislation the right to political asylum of women persecuted on the grounds of gender or those whose human rights have been violated either in times of peace or war. It could include consideration of war-related violence against women, such as mass rapes, forced pregnancies and other gender-specific abuses applied as a means of warfare, as war crimes and crimes against humanity and treat them accordingly by proper national and international institutions. It might include steps to incorporate peace education and teaching about non-violent measures of conflict resolution into school curricula, presenting them from the gender perspective, in the context of discussion on peace and democratization.

80. Action by non-governmental organizations might include publicizing information on women's contribution to peace, peace education, conflict resolution, justice and democracy, bringing its relevance for decision-making to the attention of decision makers and public opinion, recording and publishing the history of women's contribution to peace, social reconstruction and peace research. It could include supporting women peace educators and peace researchers, and encouraging women to become involved in grass-roots activities related to peace and resolution of conflicts or to choose them as a profession. It could also include campaigns to encourage women and men to serve as informal educators in bringing up young people in an atmosphere of compassion, tolerance, mutual concern and trust.

81. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include collecting and disseminating data on the participation of women in national and international military service, including peace-keeping and humanitarian operations, and studying those data with a view to eliminating gender stereotyping. It could include steps to set an example of using men and women together without discrimination in peace-keeping operations and to make training in peace-keeping available to women. This could involve applying, at the civilian level, norms of equality in recruitment, selection and assignment, and at the military operations level, of encouraging Governments to include women in their national contingents. It might involve training military and civilian peace-keeping forces to observe the human rights of women and to follow gender-

sensitive rules of conduct, for which standards should be elaborated. Other action could include a women-in-development approach in all humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations, examining and addressing the needs of refugee women, providing those women with adequate assistance, and, in the case of refugee women, monitoring the process of their settlement in the receiving countries and/or their return to their home countries.

I. Mobilizing information so as to integrate gender considerations into policy and programme planning and implementation at all levels

82. Action by Governments to address this objective might include routinely collecting statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, and strengthening national machinery for the advancement of women by locating it in a critical location in national policy-making where it can monitor the extent to which gender considerations are taken into account in government policies and programmes. It could include training government officials in gender analysis.

83. Action by non-governmental organizations might include monitoring national policies and programmes for the extent to which gender considerations have been taken into account, assisting women who have been negatively affected by programmes to make this known and to obtain relief.

84. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include promoting the global collection and dissemination of statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, and developing new indicators, especially in the context of the system of national accounts, using gender analysis in the development of programmes in financial and other development institutions. It might involve strengthening networks of focal points as well as main institutions for gender analysis.

J. Using the communications media effectively to promote equality between women and men

85. Action by Governments to address this objective might include providing access to the mass media to women and women's groups, and establishing bodies to monitor standards in terms of content and then taking steps to regulate communications that are derogatory to women. Provision could be made for women and women's groups to have equal access to telecommunications, computer and other information technology and training.

86. Action by non-governmental organizations might include the development of communications networks to link women's groups, as well as the establishment of media watch organizations and strategies to withdraw support from advertisers who continue to support unfavourable portrayals of women.

87. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include the development of international guidelines for gender equity in the media, both in employment policies and in programming.

K. Promoting action to develop the mutual responsibility of women and men to achieve equality

88. Action by Governments might include promoting the sharing of family responsibilities, creating incentives such as flexible working hours for the sharing of parental responsibilities by women and men to reduce the preponderance of men in productive activities and of women in reproductive activities, including decision-making regarding family size and child-spacing. Measures could be taken to improve communication between men and women and the understanding of their respective and joint responsibilities so that women and men are seen as equal partners in public and private life.

89. Action by non-governmental organizations might include development of special programmes that focus on young people and their development of greater understanding of and sensitivity to gender issues.

90. Action by the United Nations system could include examining existing personnel policies and practices to ensure that they provide support to women in reconciling their family and work responsibilities.

V. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

91. Implementation of the Platform for Action will need appropriate financing. Previous efforts to achieve global and national objectives for the advancement of women have always assumed that resources would be made available. Experience shows that this has seldom been the case. This section should outline in detail the resource requirements necessary to implement the proposed action at all levels and propose ways to make these resources available, including through reallocation of resources to women. It should set targets and suggest sources of funding. It should show the relationship of these resources to broader objectives, demonstrating how investment in achieving the goals of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women can have multiplier effects on other goals.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

92. This section should discuss the types of institutional arrangements at the national, regional and global levels that can ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action to ensure full accountability for its implementation. Emphasis should be given, for example, to strengthening technical and financial cooperation, to ensuring gender-sensitive planning and policy-making, and to mainstreaming women's issues further in programme planning and implementation. Institutional arrangements could be proposed to ensure cooperation and networking to increase awareness and promote joint activities for the advancement of women, including monitoring at all levels. At the global level, in particular, it should consider the type of coordination, research and advocacy arrangements that have the greatest promise for reinforcing national action and implementing international norms and standards.